

Request for Reconsideration:

Claims 1-13 currently are pending in the present application. By the foregoing amendments, Applicants are amending claim 6 to place claim 6 in independent form. No new matter is added by the foregoing amendments, and these amendments are fully supported by the specification as filed. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner enter the foregoing amendments and reconsider the above-captioned patent application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Remarks:

1. Claim Objections and Rejections.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that the Examiner indicates that claims 6 and 12 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants are rewriting claim 6 in independent form.

Nevertheless, claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as allegedly anticipated by Patent No. US 5,667,050 to Hasegawa ("Hasegawa"). Further, claims 4-5, 7-11 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly rendered obvious by Hasegawa, as applied to claims 1-3, in view of Patent No. US 6,578,687 B2 to Dau et al. ("Dau"). Applicants respectfully disagree.

2. Anticipation Rejections.

As noted above, claims 1-3 stand rejected as allegedly anticipated by Hasegawa. "A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. . . . 'The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the . . . claim.'" MPEP 2131 (citations omitted). The Office Action alleges that Hasegawa discloses each and every element of claims 1-3. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 1 describes, in part, leaf springs that "each assume an orientation such that a boost force assisting an attractive force acting on the armature is produced based on the transmission force when the armature is attracted to the rotor." Applicants submit that Hasegawa fails to disclose at least this element.

The Office Action asserts that Hasegawa discloses orienting the leaf springs to produce a boost force. See, e.g., Office Action, Page 2-3. Applicants disagree. Hasegawa describes attracting the armature "against a biasing force of the leaf spring[.]" Hasegawa, Col. 3, Lines 9-12, and "against the spring force of the leaf spring[.]" Hasegawa, Col. 4 Line 67 - Col. 5 Line 1 (emphasis added). Hasegawa does not disclose orientating the leaf springs to produce a boost force to assist the attractive force acting on the armature as described in claim 1. Thus, Hasegawa fails to disclose each and every limitation of claim 1. For at least this reason,

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner to withdraw the anticipation rejection of claim 1.

Claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1, and thus, include all of the limitations of allowable, independent claim 1. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner also withdraw the anticipation rejection of dependent claims 2 and 3.

3. Obviousness Rejections.

As noted above, the Office Action rejects claims 4-5, 7-11, and 13 as allegedly rendered obvious by Hasegawa in view of Dau. Each of these claims depends directly or indirectly from allowable, independent claim 1, and, thus, incorporates each and every limitation of claim 1. "If an independent claim is non-obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103, then any claim depending therefrom is non-obvious." MPEP 2143.03. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the obviousness rejection of claims 4-5, 7-11, and 13 at least for this reason.

Conclusion:

Applicants maintain that the above-captioned patent application, as amended, is in condition for allowance, and such disposition is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that the prosecution of this application may be furthered by discussing the application, in person or by telephone, with Applicants' representative, Applicants would welcome the opportunity to do so.

Applicants believe that no fees are due as a result of this Amendment. Nevertheless, in the event of any variance between the fees determined by Applicants and the fees determined by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, please charge or credit any such variance to the undersigned's Deposit Account No. 02-0375.

Respectfully submitted,
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